

ARNOLD ARBORETUM
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The early spring. The cold of last December exceeded the cold of any previous December in Massachusetts of which there is a record, and now in this month there have been the hottest May days eastern Massachusetts has known since a record of temperature has been kept. April, too, was warm and dry, and even the early-flowering shrubs bloomed earlier than usual. Lilac flowers, which last year did not open in time for Decoration Day were fading this year by the 19th of May, and *Viburnum Lentago*, which usually blooms here about the middle of June was opening its flowers on the 20th of May and for the last ten days has been one of the conspicuous plants in the Arboretum. Many plants, especially Crabapples, Pears, Lilacs, Hawthorns, Honey-suckles and Viburnums have not before flowered more profusely and those which normally bloom a week or two apart have this spring flowered simultaneously, with the result that during one or two weeks more flowers have been open in the Arboretum than in any other weeks in its history. The spring, however, has not been a satisfactory one, so many plants have flowered together that visitors have been unable to enjoy them all; and flowers forced by excessive heat to open before their natural time have been short-lived. Plants crippled by the winter have further suffered by the heat and drought of May which have seriously interfered with the recovery of some plants.

Some early-flowering Rhododendrons. During the past week several Rhododendrons have been in flower. One of the handsomest of these plants, *Boule de Neige*, shows no effects of a hard winter. The leaves

are as green as they were in October and the flower-buds have not been injured. It is a dwarf plant rarely growing to the height of three feet but the branches are wide-spreading and form a broad, compact, round-topped head. Little appears to be known of the history of this plant; it is evidently a hybrid and *R. caucasicum* is no doubt one of the parents. Judging by the leaves, *R. catawbiense*, or one of its hybrids, may be the other parent. The French name suggests that it was raised in France as does the name of the raiser, Oudieu, given in a recent English work on Rhododendrons. The Arboretum will be glad of information about the origin and parentage of this plant. Whatever these may have been *Boule de Neige* seems one of the hardiest Rhododendrons which can be grown successfully in this climate. Another dwarf Rhododendron, *Mont Blanc*, a variety or hybrid of *R. caucasicum*, flowered a few days earlier than *Boule de Neige*. It is a dwarfer plant and the flowers are rose color when they first open but soon become pure white. This is a plant which has bloomed in the Arboretum for several years and has never been injured. The history of its parentage and origin are not recorded. A hybrid, *R. caucasicum*, with rose-colored flowers, sold in nurseries as *R. Jacksonii* although that name properly belongs to another hybrid, has lost a good many leaves and some of the flower-buds. *R. carolinianum* is uninjured and has been flowering for the past ten days. The fact that it has been able to come through the past winter without losing a leaf or bud speaks well for the ability of this little southern plant to adapt itself to the New England climate. The form usually cultivated has pale rose-pink flowers, but the form with pure white flowers is the more common in the mountain forests of the Carolinas which is the home of this species. *R. Smirnowii*, uninjured by the winter, is again in bloom. This inhabitant of the Caucasus is a large shrub with pale gray-green leaves coated below with a thick mat of pale felt and large pink or rose-colored flowers. This plant is so hardy that it is not improbable that a new race of Rhododendrons adapted to this climate can be obtained by crossing it with *R. catawbiense*, *R. maximum* and other hardy species. The felt on the lower surface of the leaves protects them from the attacks of the lace-wing fly which has been so destructive to Rhododendrons here in recent years, but unfortunately the leaves of the hybrids of *R. Smirnowii* which have been raised have entirely lost this protection.

Cotoneaster hupehensis. The plants of this shrub in the Shrub Collection and on the southern slope of Bussey Hill are again covered with flowers. It is a broad tall shrub with wide-spreading, arching branches and small clusters of white flowers which stand up well above the leaves. The fruit is scarlet and lustrous. This species and the two mentioned in the fourth number of these Bulletins, *C. multiflora calocarpa* and *C. racemiflora soongorica* are the handsomest of the Cotoneasters discovered by Wilson in western China and perhaps the most valuable shrubs for the northern states which have been introduced by the Arboretum in recent years. *Cotoneaster divaricata* and *C. nitens* are both covered with their small pink flowers. The lustrous leaves of these plants are attractive through the season.

Midseason Lilacs are in bloom nearly three weeks earlier than usual. The best known of them, *Syringa villosa*, was raised at the Arboretum nearly thirty-five years ago and from the Arboretum has been carried into many American gardens. It is a large, round-topped shrub with large leaves and compact broad or narrow clusters of pale rose-colored or nearly white flowers which unfortunately have the disagreeable odor of Privet flowers. In spite of the disagreeable odor of the flowers this Lilac is a first-rate garden plant, and particularly valuable because it does not begin to bloom until most of the flowers of the different varieties of the common Lilac have faded. The Hungarian Lilac, *S. Josikaea*, a tall shrub with violet-colored flowers in narrow clusters, blooms a few days later than *S. villosa*. It is one of the least attractive of all Lilacs but crossed with *S. villosa* it has produced in France a race of hybrids of great beauty to which the general name of *S. Henryi* has been given. One of the handsomest of these hybrids, *Lutèce*, is now covered with its large open clusters of red-violet flowers. This is one of the handsomest Lilacs of recent creation and deserves the attention of the lovers of these plants. Another of this race of hybrids, *S. eximia*, blooms a few days later and has more compact clusters of rose-colored or reddish flowers which after opening become light pink. Another of these midseason Lilacs, *S. Wolfii*, is also in bloom. This is a little known species from northern China, and has leaves like those of *S. villosa*, but the flowers are smaller and violet-purple, and the flower-clusters are much larger. This promises to be a valuable shrub in northern gardens. It blooms a few days earlier than *S. Koehneana*, a native of Korea, a large shrub with slender drooping branches and broad, unsymmetrical clusters of slender rose-colored or pink flowers which have little perfume. Although this plant has been growing in the Arboretum for sixteen years, it did not begin to flower freely until two years ago.

Crataegus pinnatifida. In the thirty-five years this plant has been an inhabitant of the Arboretum it has never been more covered with flowers than during the past week. It is a native of eastern Siberia and northern China and is an arborescent shrub or small tree. The leaves are large, deeply lobed, thick, and lustrous on the upper surface; the flowers are large, in many-flowered compact clusters, and are followed by dull red, oblong fruit about three-quarters of an inch in length. The fruit is less valuable for jelly than that of some of the American Crabapples of the Mollis Group. It is esteemed by the Chinese, however, who plant and carefully cultivate orchards of this Hawthorn in the neighborhood of Peking. If a selection of the six handsomest Hawthorns of the world was to be made many persons would include in the six this Chinese species.

Cornus controversa. It is fortunate that the winter has had no bad effect on this tree which promises to be one of the important introductions from eastern Asia. Like our *Cornus alternifolia*, it has wide-spreading branches and alternate leaves, but the flower-clusters are larger. It is a larger tree, sometimes growing in western China to the height of sixty feet. It is now in bloom in the supplementary

Cornel Collection on the right-hand side of the Meadow Road and in the Peter's Hill Nursery where the largest specimen in the Arboretum can be seen.

Early American Azaleas. The first flowers of the earliest of these plants, *R. (Azalea) Vaseyi*, have already faded. *R. nudiflora* and *R. canescens* have been in flower for a week on Azalea Path. Of the latter, which is a native of Massachusetts, there is a good mass on the right-hand side of the Meadow Road in front of the Lindens which for a long distance round has filled the air with delicate perfume. On Azalea Path the flower-buds of the Appalachian *R. (Azalea) calendulaceum* are already open. In flower the most beautiful of Azaleas, no other North American shrub equals it in the splendor of its bloom.

Berberis Vernae. Many of the new Barberries with deciduous leaves discovered by Wilson in western China bloom much later in the season, but a plant of *Berberis Vernae* in the collection of Chinese Shrubs on the slope of Bussey Hill is now covered with its short clusters of light yellow flowers. It is an attractive shrub with gracefully drooping branches and small bright green leaves, and promises to be a good addition to the large number of hardy Barberries which can be grown successfully in this climate.

Early Diervillas. The first of these plants to bloom, the Korean *Diervilla florida venusta*, is one of the hardiest and when in flower perhaps the handsomest of all the species and hybrids of Diervilla, better known as Weigela. The New England winter has no terrors for this Korean plant, and it has not before been more thickly covered with its handsome rose-colored flowers. It is growing in the Shrub Collection and on Hickory Path near Centre Street. Varieties or hybrids of *Diervilla praecox*, a plant of uncertain origin, raised recently in France, have flowered well this spring in the Shrub Collection and deserve the attention of the public. The following varieties have been conspicuous: Vestale with white flowers, Gracieux with pink and white flowers, Conquérant with rose-colored flowers, and Fleur de Mai with pink flowers.

Rosa spinosissima, var. *altaica* (or *grandiflora*) has not been hurt by the winter and has been full of flowers as usual. This is one of the largest and perhaps the handsomest of all the varieties of the so-called Scotch Rose. It is a native of southern Siberia and in this climate often grows six or seven feet tall and broad. The flowers are faintly tinged with yellow and are produced in great numbers. It is one of the handsomest and hardiest of all single-flowered Roses which can be grown in northern gardens; and as the plant produces suckers freely, and as these are easily transplanted, there is no reason why this Rose should not be more common than it is in American gardens.